

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 5189

E.O. 11652: GDS 12-31-79

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJ: FORMAT FOR DPC MINISTERIAL MEETINGS

REF: A. USNATO 5135 B. USNATO 4864 LIMDIS

SUMMARY. DURING OCTOBER 26 DRC MEETING, CHAIRMAN SOLICITED REACTIONS TO DRAFT DPC MINISTERIAL AGENDA. US REP RAISED THE QUESTION OF CHANGING THE FORMAT FOR THE DPC MINISTERIAL MEETINGS. REACTIONS WERE MIXED, BUT MOST ALLIES SUPPORTED AT LEAST SOME ASPECTS OF US PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

1. AT END OF OCTOBER 26 DRC MEETING DEVOTED TO ITALIAN MULTILATERAL EXAMINATION (SEPTTEL), CHAIRMAN (ASYG HUMPHREYS) SOLICITED INITIAL REACTIONS TO DRAFT DPC MINISTERIAL AGENDA WHICH DRC SECRETARY HAD INFORMALLY CIRCULATED (REFTEL A).

2. US REP (CLINARD) NOTED ABSENCE OF ITEMS ON CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS (CNAD) AND ON NUCLEAR PLANNING.

3. CHAIRMAN QUESTIONED VALUE OF CNAD ITEM SINCE MINISTERS IN PRECEDING MEETINGS HAD HAD NOTHING TO SAY ON SUBJECT. ON NUCLEAR PLANNING ITEM, HE OFFERED TO DISCUSS QUESTION FURTHER WITHIN INTERNATIONAL STAFF.

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4. FRG REP WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT AGENDA AS CIRCULATED. ITALIAN AND NORWEGIAN REPS APPROVED AGENDA FROM DELEGATION-LEVEL BUT AS MAJORITY, WERE AWAITING INSTRUCTED COMMENTS.

5. US REP TOOK OCCASION TO RAISE THE QUESTION OF CHANGING THE FORMAT OF DPC MINISTERIAL MEETINGS (AS A FOLLOW UP TO DISCUSSION REPORTED REFTEL B). HE SAID THAT US AIM WAS TO SEEK A MORE SUBSTANTIVE DISALOGUE AND A FREER EXCHANGE AMONG MINISTERS. HE SUGGESTED THAT: MINISTERS MIGHT CIRCULATE THEIR LENGTHY STATEMENTS IN ADVANCE OR GREATLY SHORTEN THEIR INTERVENTIONS; MEETING BE AGENDA-ORIENTED; A PORTION OF MEETING MIGHT BE SET ASIDE FOR FREERER DISCUSSION; THIS PORTION OF MEETING MIGHT TAKE PLACE WITH MORE RESTRICTED ATTENDANCE IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE MORE LIVELY AND MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS.

6. NORWEGIAN REP CONCURRED THAT MINISTERS COULD SHORTEN STATEMENTS BUT THOUGHT HIS DEFMIN COULD ONLY SPEAK FREELY IN NORWEGIAN AND WOULD THEREFORE WISH TO READ HIS STATEMENT.

7. UK REP, ON A DELEGATION-BASIS, BELIEVED HIS AUTHORITIES COULD SUPPORT THE US SUGGESTIONS IN GENERAL TERMS, BUT THOUGHT THAT GETTING MINISTERS TO FOCUS ON STATEMENTS FOR ADVANCE CIRCULATION WOULD BE DIFFICULT. HE CONCURRED IN THE BENEFITS OF AN AGENDA-ORIENTED DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTED THAT NO MINISTER SHOULD SPEAK FOR LONGER THAN FIVE MINUTES ON A PARTICULAR AGENDA ITEM. HE SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF A FREE DISCUSSION WITH RESTRICTED ATTENDANCE DURING SOME PORTION OF THE MEETING AND SUGGESTED LHMAT MINISTERS COULD INDICATE TO THEIR COLLEAGUES IN ADVANCE TOPICS THAT THEY INTENDED TO RAISE. CHAIRMAN CONCURRED IN LATTER POINT.

8. FRG REP SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THE SUGGESTIONS WITH HIS AUTHORITIES IN MOD, "UP TO, BUT NOT INCLUDING MY MINISTER" AND THAT THEY HAD REACTED VERY FAVORABLY. RESPONDING TO NORWEGIAN REP'S COMMENT, HE RECALLED THAT DEFMIN LEBER BROUGHT HIS OWN INTERPRETER TO SUCH MEETINGS SO HE COULD SPEAK FREELY AND MEANINGFULLY IN GERMAN. FRG AUTHORITIES WOULD WELCOME AN AGENDA-ORIENTED DISCUSSION AND WOULD BE WILLING TO SHORTEN MAIN INTERVENTIONS SO THAT A PORTION OF THE MEETING COULD BE SET ASIDE FOR FREER DISCUSSION.

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9. CANADIAN REP ON PERSONAL BASIS SUPPORTED AGENDA-ORIENTED DISCUSSION, BUT AGREED WITH UK ABOUT DIFFICULTY OF GETTING MODS TO FOCUS ON THEIR STATEMENTS FAR ENOUGH IN ADVANCE FOR CIRCULATION.

10. DANISH REP ON PERSONAL BASIS PREFERRED TO RETAIN PRACTICE OF READING STATEMENTS, ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THEY MIGHT BE SHORTENED; HE THOUGHT THAT A FREE DISCUSSION PERIOD WAS A GOOD IDEA.

11. NETHERLANDS REP, HAVING HAD INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE HAGUE "AT THE CIVIL-SERVANT LEVEL", WISHED TO RETAIN STATEMENTS, ALTHOUGH THEY COULD BE SHORTENED. HE LIKE IDEA OF MORE AGENDA

ORIENTED DISCUSSION. HE SUPPORTED A MORE RESTRICTED MEETING FOR FREE DISCUSSION. REVIEWING DRAFT AGENDA, HE SUGGESTED ON A PERSONAL BASIS THAT DELEGATIONS CONSIDER EXTENDING ONE-DAY MEETING TO THE FOLLOWING MORNING SO THAT MORE TIME WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSIONS DURING MEETING.

12. GREEK, ITALIAN, AND TURKISH REPS WISHED TO GET THEIR AUTHORITIES' REACTIONS BEFORE PUTTING FORWARD IDEAS.

13. CHAIRMAN INTERPRETED THE US REP'S INTERVENTION IN THE DRC AS GIVING NOTICE TO OTHER DELEGATIONS THAT THE U.S. AMBASSADOR WOULD FORMALLY RAISE THE DPC QUESTION WITH PERMREPS. HE SUGGESTED THAT PERMREPS COULD DISCUSS POSSIBLE CHANGES TO DPC FORMAT WHEN THE NAC DISCUSSES THE SYG'S PO ON RESTRUCTURING THE NAC MINISTERIAL MEETING FORMAT (USNATO 4466 LIMDIS).

14. COMMENT. WE BELIEVE SOME PROGRESS WAS MADE TOWARDS US OBJECTIVE DURING THIS MEETING. WE WILL CONTINUE INFORMAL CONTACTS WITH IS AND DELEGATIONS, IN ANTICIPATION OF FORTH-COMING PERMREPS DISCUSSION OF THIS QUESTION. END COMMENT.
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